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DECEMBER MEETING, 1892.

THE stated meeting was held on Thursday, the 8th instant, at three o'clock, P. M.; the President, Dr. GEORGE E. ELLIS, in the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved.

The Librarian read the list of donors to the Library during the last month.

Mr. Charles C. Smith, Hon. Mellen Chamberlain, and Rev. Henry F. Jenks were appointed a committee to publish a volume of Belcher Papers.

Mr. GAMALIEL BRADFORD referred to the paper of Mr. Adams on the Spanish Discovery of America, read at the November meeting, and said that it was not so much differences of race as differences of government and institutions which affected the character of European colonization in America. The English who went to India were as rapacious as the Spaniards; but the government of India is the most beneficent that the world has ever seen.

Hon. MELLEN CHAMBERLAIN expressed his dissent from the view of Mr. Adams, that only the English colonists should be commemorated here, or that the English or Dutch alone should have discovered America, if the best results were to follow. The Latin races have contributed to our civilization what the Saxons have not. The natives were taken up by them and incorporated into citizenship, whereas the Teutonic races have exterminated them. The Indians have been protected in Canada and Mexico, and nothing so disgraceful occurred as has taken place in our own country in this very century. The Latin races did not aim to found an empire, but to Christianize the inhabitants.

Mr. C. F. ADAMS, in reply, said that he did not differ essentially from Judge Chamberlain, and did not disparage Latin civilization, literature, and art, for these speak for themselves. He referred, however, to the uses which the Spaniards made of the gold they brought from America, and to their persecutions in the West Indies.

Hon. MELLEN CHAMBERLAIN said that at that time neither a state nor a church had been established, but an interregnum existed, and individuals alone were responsible for the outrages.

Dr. SAMUEL A. GREEN exhibited a collection of fac-similes of Boston newspapers and other rare publications, and made the following remarks:—

The practice of reproducing odd numbers of early Boston newspapers in fac-simile, without any token or explanation of the fact, may cause hereafter some confusion among librarians and others not familiar with all the circumstances of the case. It began, so far as I can learn, nearly forty years ago, before the period when exact fac-similes could be made by the various processes so well known to-day. At that time the appearance of the original print was imitated as closely as type would allow, and, by the use of paper slightly discolored, the general effect was fairly good. For the most part the whole affair was prompted by private speculation, as the sheet generally contained some item of special interest which would help the sale of the reproductions.

Among the earliest of these reprints is "The Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal," March 12, 1770, which gives an account of the massacre in State Street on March 5 of that year. This copy was made by type on tinted paper; and from time to time specimens are offered for sale at these rooms by innocent but ignorant persons, who think that they are genuine copies and not modern imitations. Another reprint from type is "The New-England Weekly Journal," April 8, 1728, a half-sheet newspaper which contains nothing of special interest. Still another is "The New-England Courant," February 11, 1723, published originally by James Franklin; but this particular number was the first that bore the name of his distinguished brother Benjamin as the publisher. This issue was published on the occasion of the dedication of the Franklin monument in School Street, and printed on a press said to have been used by the great philosopher. The number was originally set up from a copy in this library, when the form was stereotyped and many impressions were struck off. It purports to be a fac-simile of the original; but such is not the fact, as the lines in the two numbers rarely agree in their justification.

Perhaps the most common of these reproductions is the first number of "The Boston News-Letter," April 24, 1704, of which only three original copies are known to exist. With a possible exception, the News-Letter was the earliest newspaper published on this continent, and for that reason a copy always excites the curiosity of the crowd. The exception just alluded to is a solitary number of "Publick Occurrences, Both Forreign and Domestick," printed in Boston on September 25, 1690, which was advertised to appear "once a moneth"; but long before the time of its second appearance it was summarily suppressed by an order of the Governor and Council, in which the publication is spoken of as a pamphlet. It was printed on the first three pages of a folded sheet, — two columns to a page, and each page about seven inches by eleven in size. The original number, without doubt now unique, is in the Colonial State Paper Office, London; and more than thirty-five years ago I made a transcript, which appears in the first volume (pp. 228-231) of "The Historical Magazine" (Boston) for August, 1857. This Society has in its library a contemporaneous copy of the printed order suppressing the newspaper; and being a rare document, it is given here, line for line, after the original:—

BY THE
GOVERNOUR & COUNCIL

WHEREAS some have lately presumed to Print and Disperse a Pamphlet, Entituled, Publick Occurrences, both Forreign and Domestick: Boston, Thursday, Septemb. 25th. 1690. *Without the least Privity or Countenance of Authority.*

The Governour and Council having had the perusal of the said Pamphlet, and finding that therein is contained Reflections of a very high nature: As also sundry doubtful and uncertain Reports, do hereby manifest and declare their high Resentment and Disallowance of said Pamphlet, and Order that the same be Suppressed and called in; strickly forbidding any person or persons for the future to Set forth any thing in Print without Licence first obtained from those that are or shall be appointed by the Government to grant the same.

By Order of the Governour & Council.

Isaac Addington, Secr.

Boston, September 29th. 1690.

Within a year or two, in a catalogue of a London bookseller, I have seen advertised for sale at a comparatively high price, a copy of the "Ulster County Gazette" (Kingston, New York), January 4, 1800, presumably the genuine newspaper of that date, which gave an account of Washington's death. Knowing that this particular number had been reproduced from type, and suspecting that the advertised copy was not an original, I wrote to the English dealer, asking him the question. In due time the answer came, saying that after his attention was called to the fact, he was satisfied the newspaper was a modern reprint, and that it should be at once withdrawn. There are three different editions, and perhaps more, of this reproduction of the Gazette; and in the corner of one of them appear the words "Copy Right Secured," which is the only intimation that the number is not original.

The Historical Library possesses a file of "The Halifax Gazette," extending over a period of more than three years, which first appeared on March 23, 1752, and was the earliest newspaper printed in Nova Scotia. Each number consisted of a single leaf, and the set is supposed to be unique. During the present year the first issue of this sheet has been reproduced on old-looking paper, and appears in folded form as an illustration to the volume entitled "The Canadian Newspaper Directory" (Montreal, 1892); but the copy is set up from type, and is by no means an exact fac-simile. At some future day this reproduction of the Gazette may cause as much confusion as that of the Boston newspapers.

Mr. WINSLOW WARREN mentioned that he had a letter written by James Warren, at Cambridge, the day after the battle of Bunker Hill, in which reference is made to James Otis as being in that battle, and he inquired whether this circumstance was mentioned by any other contemporary writer.

Hon. MELLEN CHAMBERLAIN said that at about that time the friends of Mr. Otis were obliged to put him under guardianship, as his mind was unsettled.

Mr. JUSTIN WINSOR said he had been asked if it was not sufficient proof that the Northmen did not remain long here, that they did not have any knowledge of maize and tobacco. This inquiry led to brief remarks by Mr. WINSOR,

Dr. SAMUEL A. GREEN, and Rev. Dr. EDMUND F. SLAFTER
on the knowledge which the Indians had of tobacco.

On motion of Mr. CHARLES C. SMITH, it was

Voted, That the income of the Massachusetts Historical
Trust Fund for the current year be appropriated toward
the publication of the Society's Collections.

A new serial of the Proceedings of the Society, including
the October and November meetings, was ready for distribu-
tion at the meeting.